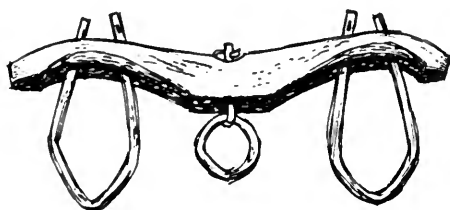


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Douglas, Stephen A.
Speech delivered at
Bloomington July 16, 1858

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THE ISSUES OF 1858.

S P E E C H

—OF—

SENATOR DOUGLAS.

Delivered at Bloomington, Ill., July 16th, 1858.

SENATOR DOUGLAS said :

Mr. Chairman, and fellow citizens of McLean county—to say that I am profoundly touched by the hearty welcome you have extended me, and by the kind and complimentary sentiments you have expressed towards me is but a feeble expression of the feelings of my heart.

I appear before you this evening for the purpose of vindicating the course which I have felt it my duty to pursue in the Senate of the United States, upon the great public questions which have agitated the country since I last addressed you. I am aware that my Senatorial course has been arraigned, not only by political foes, but by a few men pretending to belong to the Democratic party, and yet acting in alliance with the enemies of that party, for the purpose of electing Republicans to Congress in this State, in place of the present Democratic delegation. I desire your attention whilst I address you, and then I will ask your verdict, whether I have not in all things acted in entire good faith, and honestly carried out the principles, the professions, and the avowals which I made before my constituents, previous to my going to the Senate.

During the last session of Congress, the great question of controversy has been the admission of Kansas into the Union under the Lecompton Constitution. I need not inform you that from the beginning to the end I took bold, determined, and unrelenting ground in opposition to that Lecompton Constitution. My reason for that course is contained in the fact that that instrument was not the act and deed of the people of Kansas, and did not embody their will. I hold it to be a fundamental principle in all free governments—a principle asserted in the Declaration of Independence, and underlying the Constitution of the United States, as well as the Constitution of every State of the Union—that every people ought to have the right to form, adopt and ratify the Constitution under which they are to live. (“ Good, good,” and three cheers.) When I introduced the Nebraska bill in the Senate of the United States, in 1854, I incorporated in it the provision that it was the true intent and meaning of the bill, not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, or to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and

regulate their own domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States. ("That's the doctrine.") In that bill the pledge was distinctly made that the people of Kansas should be left not only free, but perfectly free to form and regulate their own domestic institutions to suit themselves; and the question arose, when the Lecompton Constitution was sent into Congress, and the admission of Kansas not only asked, but attempted to be forced under it, whether or not that Constitution was the free act and deed of the people of Kansas? No man pretends that it embodied their will. Every man in America knows that it was rejected by the people of Kansas, by a majority of over ten thousand, before the attempt was made in Congress to force the Territory into the Union under that Constitution. I resisted, therefore, the Lecompton Constitution because it was a violation of the great principle of self-government, upon which all our institutions rest. I do not wish to mislead you, or to leave you in doubt as to the motives of my action. I did not oppose the Lecompton Constitution upon the ground of the slavery clause contained in it. I made my speech against that instrument before the vote was taken on the slavery clause. At the time I made it I did not know whether that clause would be voted in or out; whether it would be included in the Constitution, or excluded from it, and it made no difference with me what the result of the vote was, for the reason that I was contending for a principle, under which you have no more right to force a free State upon a people against their will, than you have to force a slave State upon them without their consent. (Great enthusiasm.) The error consisted in attempting to control the free action of the people of Kansas in any respect whatever. It is no argument with me to say that such and such a clause of the Constitution was not palatable, that you did not like it; it is a matter of no consequence whether you in Illinois like any clause in the Kansas Constitution or not; it is not a question for you, but it is a question for the people of Kansas. They have the right to make a Constitution in accordance with their own wishes, and if you do not like it you are not bound to go there and live under it. We in Illinois have made a Constitution to suit ourselves, and we think we have a tolerably good one; but whether we have or not, it is nobody's business but our own. If the people in Kentucky do not like it, they need not come here to live under it; if the people of Indiana are not satisfied with it what matters it to us? We, and we alone, have the right to a voice in its adoption or rejection. Reasoning thus, my friends, my efforts were directed to the vindication of the great principle involving the right of the people of each State and each Territory to form and regulate their own domestic institutions to suit themselves, subject only to the Constitution of our common country. (Applause.) I am rejoiced to be enabled to say to you that we fought that battle until we forced the advocates of the Lecompton instrument to abandon the attempt of inflicting it upon the people of Kansas, without first giving them an opportunity of rejecting it. When we compelled them to abandon that effort, they resorted to a scheme. They agreed to refer the Constitution back to the people of Kansas, thus conceding the correctness of the principle for which I had contended, and granting all I had desired, provided the mode of that reference, and the mode of submission to the people had been just, fair and equal. I did not consider the mode of submission provided, in what is known as the "English" bill, a fair submission, and for this simple reason, among others: It provided, in effect, that if the people of Kansas would accept the Lecompton Constitution that they might come in with 35,000 inhabitants, but that, if they rejected it, in order that they might form a constitution agreeable to their own feelings, and conformable to their own principles, that they should not be received into the Union until they had 93,420 inhabitants. In other words, it said to the people, if you will come into the Union as a slaveholding State, you shall be admitted with 35,000 inhabitants, but if you insist on being a free State, you shall not be admitted until you have 93,420. I was not willing to discriminate between free States and slave States in this confederacy. I will not put a restriction upon a slave State that I would not put upon a free State, and I will not permit, if I can prevent it, a restriction being put upon a free State which is not applied with the same force to the

slaveholding States. (Cheers.) Equality among the States is a cardinal and fundamental principle in our confederacy, and cannot be violated without overturning our system of government. (Cheers.) Hence I demanded that the free States and the slaveholding States should be kept on an exact equality, one with the other, as the Constitution of the United States had placed them. If the people of Kansas want a slaveholding State, let them have it, and if they want a free State they have a right to it, and it is not for the people of Illinois or Missouri, or New York, or Kentucky, to complain, whatever the decision of the people of Kansas may be upon that point.

But while I was not content with the mode of submission contained in the English bill, and while I could not sanction it for the reason that in my opinion it violated the great principle of equality among the different States, yet when it became the law of the land, and under it the question was referred back to the people of Kansas for their decision at an election to be held on the first Monday in August next, I bowed in deference, because whatever decision the people shall make at that election must be final and conclusive of the whole question. If the people of Kansas accept the proposition submitted by Congress, from that moment Kansas will become a State of the Union and there is no way of keeping her out if you should try. The act of admission would then become irrevocable; Kansas would be a State, and there would be an end of the controversy. On the other hand, if at that election the people of Kansas shall reject the proposition, as it is now generally thought will be the case, from that moment the Lecompton Constitution is dead, and again there is an end of the controversy. So you see that either way, on the 3d of August next, the Lecompton controversy ceases and terminates forever; and a similar question can never arise unless some man shall attempt to play the Lecompton game over again. But my fellow citizens I am well convinced that that game will never be attempted again; it has been so solemnly and thoroughly rebuked during the last session of Congress that it will find but few advocates in the future. The President of the United States in his annual message expressly recommends that the example of the Minnesota case, wherein Congress required the Constitution to be submitted to the vote of the people for ratification or rejection, shall be followed in all future cases; (Good!) and all we have to do is to sustain as one man that recommendation, and the Kansas controversy can never again arise.

My friends, I do not desire you to understand me as claiming for myself any special merit for the course I have pursued on this question. I simply did my duty, a duty enjoined by fidelity, by honor, by patriotism; a duty which I could not have shrunk from in my opinion without dishonor and faithlessness to my constituency. Besides I only did what it was in the power of any one man to do. There were others, men of eminent ability, men of wide reputation renowned all over America, who led the van and are entitled to the greatest share of the credit. Foremost among them all, as he was head and shoulders above them all, was Kentucky's great and gallant statesman, John J. Crittenden. (Good, good, and cheers.) By his course upon this question he has shown himself a worthy successor of the immortal Clay, and well may Kentucky be proud of him. (Applause.) I will not withhold, either, the meed of praise due the Republican party in Congress for the course which they pursued. In the language of the *N. Y. Tribune* they came to the Douglas platform, abandoning their own, (cheers) believing that under the peculiar circumstances they would in that mode best subserve the interests of the country. (Good, good, and applause.) My friends, when I am battling for a great principle I want aid and support from whatever quarter I can get it in order to carry out that principle. ("That's right.") I never hesitate in my course when I find those who on all former occasions differed from me upon the principle finally coming to its support. Nor is it for me to inquire into the motives which animated the Republican members of Congress in supporting the Crittenden-Montgomery Bill. It is enough for me that in that case they came square up and endorsed the great principle of the Kansas, Nebraska Bill, which declared that Kansas should be received into the Union, with slavery or without, as its constitution should prescribe. (Cheers.) I was the more rejoiced at the action

of the Republicans on that occasion for another reason. I could not forget, you will not soon forget, how unanimous that party was in 1854 in declaring that never should another slave State be admitted into this Union under any circumstances whatever, and yet we find that during this last winter they came up and voted to a man declaring that Kansas should come in as a State with slavery under the Lecompton Constitution, if her people desired it, and that if they did not that they might form a new constitution with slavery or without, just as they pleased. I do not question the motive when men do a good act; I give them credit for the act; and if they will stand by that principle in the future, and abandon their heresy of "no more slave States even if the people want them," I will then give them still more credit. I am afraid though that they will not stand by it in the future. (Laughter.) If they do, I will freely forgive them all the abuse they heaped upon me in 1854, for having advocated and carried out that same principle in the Kansas Nebraska bill.

Illinois stands proudly forward as a State which early took her position in favor of the principle of popular sovereignty as applied to the Territories of the United States. When the compromise measure of 1850 passed, predicated upon that principle, you recollect the excitement which prevailed throughout the northern portion of this State. I vindicated those measures then, and defended myself for having voted for them, upon the ground that they embodied the principle that every people ought to have the privilege of forming and regulating their own institutions to suit themselves—that each State had that right, and I saw no reason why it should not be extended to the Territories. When the people of Illinois had an opportunity of passing judgment upon those measures they endorsed them by a vote of their representatives in the Legislature—sixty-one in the affirmative and only four in the negative—in which they asserted that the principle embodied in the measures was the birth-right of freemen, the gift of Heaven, a principle vindicated by our revolutionary fathers, and that no limitation should ever be placed upon it, either in the organization of a Territorial government or the admission of a State into the Union. That resolution still stands unrepealed on the journals of the Legislature of Illinois. In obedience to it, and in exact conformity with the principle, I brought in the Kansas-Nebraska bill, requiring that the people should be left perfectly free in the formation of their institutions, and in the organization of their government. I now submit to you whether I have not in good faith redeemed that pledge that the people of Kansas should be left perfectly free to form and regulate their institutions to suit themselves. ("You have," and cheers.) And yet, while no man can arise in any crowd and deny that I have been faithful to my principles, and redeemed my pledge, we find those who are struggling to crush and defeat me, for the very reason that I have been faithful in carrying out those measures. ("They can't do it," and great cheers.) We find the Republican leaders forming an alliance with professed Lecompton men to defeat every Democratic nominee and elect Republicans in their places, and aiding and defending them in order to help them break down Anti-Lecompton men, whom they acknowledge did right in their opposition to Lecompton.—("They can't do it.") The only hope that Mr. Lincoln has of defeating me for the Senate rests in the fact, that I was faithful to my principles, and that he may be able in consequence of that fact to form a coalition with Lecompton men, who wish to defeat me for that fidelity. ("They will never do it."—"Never in the State of Illinois," and cheers.)

This is one element of strength upon which he relies to accomplish his object. He hopes he can secure the few men claiming to be friends of the Lecompton Constitution, and for that reason you will find he does not say a word against the Lecompton Constitution or its supporters. He is as silent as the grave upon that subject. Behold Mr. Lincoln courting Lecompton votes, in order that he may go to the Senate as the Representative of Republican principles! (Laughter.) You know that the alliance exists. I think you will find that it will ooze out before the contest is over. ("That's my opinion," and cheers.)

Every Republican paper takes ground with my Lecompton enemies, encouraging them, stimulating them in their opposition to me and styling my

friends bolters from the Democratic party and their Lecompton allies the true Democratic party of the country. If they think that they can mislead and deceive the people of Illinois or the Democracy of Illinois, by that sort of an unnatural and unholy alliance, I think they show very little sagacity, or give the people very little credit for intelligence. ("That's so," and cheers.) It must be a contest of principle. Either the radical abolition principles of Mr. Lincoln must be maintained, or the strong, constitutional, national Democratic principles with which I am identified must be carried out.

There can be but two great political parties in this country. The contest this year and in 1860 must necessarily be between the Democracy and the Republicans, if we can judge from present indications. My whole life has been identified with the Democratic party. (Cheers.) I have devoted all of my energies to advocating its principles and sustaining its organization. In this State the party was never better united or more harmonious than at this time. (Cheers.) The State convention which assembled on the 2d of April and nominated FONDEY AND FRENCH was regularly called by the State Central Committee, appointed by the previous State convention for that purpose. The meetings in each county in the State for the appointment of delegates to the convention were regularly called by the county committees, and the proceedings in every county in the State, as well as in the State convention were regular in all respects. No convention was ever more harmonious in its action, or showed a more tolerant and just spirit towards brother Democrats. The leaders of the party there assembled declared their unalterable attachment to the time honored principles and organization of the Democratic party, and to the Cincinnati platform. They declared that that platform was the only authoritative exposition of Democratic principles, and that it must so stand until changed by another national convention; that in the meantime they would make no new tests, and submit to none; that they would proscribe no Democrat or permit the proscription of Democrats because of their opinion upon Lecomptonism, or upon any other issue which has arisen; but would recognize all men as Democrats who remained inside of the organization, preserved the usages of the party, and supported its nominees. (Great applause.) These bolting Democrats who now claim to be the peculiar friends of the National Administration, and have formed an alliance with Mr. Lincoln and the Republicans for the purpose of defeating the Democratic party, have ceased to claim fellowship with the Democratic organization; have entirely separated themselves from it, and are endeavoring to build up a faction in the State, not with the hope or expectation of electing any one man who professes to be a Democrat to office in any county in the State, but merely to secure the defeat of the Democratic nominees and the election of Republicans in their places. What excuse can any honest Democrat have for abandoning the Democratic organization and joining with the Republicans, ("none") to defeat our nominees in view of the platform established by the State convention? They cannot pretend that they were proscribed because of their opinions upon Lecompton or any other question, for the convention expressly declared that they recognized all as good Democrats who remained inside of the organization, and abided by the nominations. If the question is settled or is to be considered as finally disposed of by the vote on the 3d of August, what possible excuse can any good Democrat make for keeping up a division for the purpose of prostrating his party, after that election is over and the controversy has terminated? It is evident that all who shall keep up this warfare for the purpose of dividing and destroying the party have made up their minds to abandon the Democratic organization forever, and to join those for whose benefit they are now trying to distract our party, and elect Republicans in the place of the Democratic nominees.

I submit the question to you whether I have been right or wrong in the course I have pursued in Congress. ("Right! right!" in one unanimous shout.) And I submit, also, whether I have not redeemed in good faith every pledge I have made to you? ("You have.") Then my friends, the question recurs whether I shall be sustained or rejected? ("Sustained.") If you are of the opinion that Mr. Lincoln will advance the interests of Illinois better than I can; that he will sustain her honor and her dignity higher than it has been in

my power to do; that your interests, and the interests of your children require his election instead of mine, it is your duty to give him your support. ("We don't think so.") If, on the contrary, you think that my adherence to these great fundamental principles upon which our government is founded is the true mode of sustaining the peace and harmony of the country, and maintaining the perpetuity of the republic, I then ask you to stand by me in the efforts I have made to that end. ("We will do it!" "We will stand by you!")

And this brings me to the consideration of the two points at issue between Mr. Lincoln and myself. The Republican convention when it assembled at Springfield, did me and the country the honor of indicating the man who was to be their standard bearer, and the embodiment of their principles in this State. I owe them my gratitude for thus making up a direct issue between Mr. Lincoln and myself. I shall have no controversies of a personal character with Mr. Lincoln. I have known him well for a quarter of a century. I have known him, as you all know him, a kind-hearted, amiable gentleman, a right good fellow, a worthy citizen, of eminent ability as a lawyer, and I have no doubt, sufficient ability to make a good Senator. The question, then, for you to decide is whether his principles are more in accordance with the genius of our free institutions, the peace and harmony of the republic than those which I advocate. ("No!" "no!" "Stephen A. Douglas, forever!") He tells you, in his speech made at Springfield, before the Convention which gave him his unanimous nomination, that:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand."

"I believe this Government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free."

"I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I don't expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided."

"It will become all one thing, or all the other."

That is the fundamental principle upon which he sets out in this campaign. ("We don't believe one word of it, no, never.") Well, I do not suppose you will believe one word of it when you come to examine it carefully, and see its consequences. Although the Republic has existed from 1789 to this day, divided into free States and slave States, yet we are told that in the future it cannot endure unless they shall become all free or all slave ("all free.") For that reason he says, as the gentleman in the crowd says, that they must be all free ("no, no.") He wishes to go to the Senate of the United States in order to carry out that line of public policy which will compel all the States in the south to become free. How is he going to do it? (Laughter.) Has Congress any power over the subject of slavery in Kentucky, or Virginia, or any other State of this Union? How, then, is Mr. Lincoln going to carry out that principle which he says is essential to the existence of this Union, to wit: that slavery must be abolished in all the States of the Union, or must be established in them all. You convince the South that they must either establish slavery in Illinois, and in every other free State, or submit to its abolition in every Southern State, and you invite them to make a warfare upon the Northern States in order to establish slavery, for the sake of perpetuating it at home. Thus, Mr. Lincoln invites, by his proposition, a war of sections, a war between Illinois and Kentucky, a war between the free States and the slave States, a war between the North and the South, for the purpose of either exterminating slavery in every Southern State, or planting it in every Northern State. He tells you that the safety of this Republic, that the existence of this Union depends upon that warfare being carried on until one section or the other shall be entirely subdued. The States must all be free or slave, for a house divided against itself cannot stand. That is Mr. Lincoln's argument upon that question. My friends, is it possible to preserve peace between the North and the South if such a doctrine shall prevail in either section of the Union? Will you ever submit to a warfare waged by the Southern States to establish slavery in Illinois? ("No.") What man in Illinois would not lose the last drop of his heart's blood before he would submit to the institution of slavery being forced upon us by the other States, against our will? And if that be true of us, what Southern man would not shed the last drop of his

the country? ("No, never.") If the Republican party cannot trust Democratic Judges, how can they expect us to trust Republican Judges, when they have been selected in advance for the purpose of packing a decision in the event of a case arising. My fellow citizens, whenever partisan politics shall be carried on to the bench; whenever the Judges shall be arraigned upon the stump, and their judicial conduct reviewed in town meetings and caucuses; whenever the independence and integrity of the judiciary shall be tampered with to the extent of rendering them partial, blind, and suppliant tools, what security will you have for your rights and your liberties? ("None.") I therefore take issue with Mr. Lincoln directly in regard to this warfare upon the Supreme Court of the United States. I accept the decision of that Court as it was pronounced. Whatever my individual opinions may be, I, as a good citizen, am bound by the laws of the land as the Legislature makes them, as the Court expounds them, and as the executive officers administer them. I am bound by our Constitution as our fathers made it, and as it is our duty to support it. I am bound, as a good citizen, to sustain the constituted authorities, and to resist, discourage, and beat down, by all lawful and peaceful means, all attempts at exciting mobs, or violence, or any other revolutionary proceedings against the Constitution and the constituted authorities of the country. ("Good, good," cheers.)

Mr. Lincoln is alarmed for fear that, under the Dred Scott decision, slavery will go into all the Territories of the United States. All I have to say is that, with or without that decision, slavery will go just where the people want it, and not one inch further. You have had experience upon that subject in the case of Kansas. You have been told by the Republican party that from 1854, when the Kansas-Nebraska bill passed, down to last winter, that slavery was sustained and supported in Kansas by the laws of what they called a "bogus" legislature. And how many slaves were there in the Territory at the end of last winter? Not as many at the end of that period as there were on the day the Kansas Nebraska bill passed. There was quite a number of slaves in Kansas, taken there under the Missouri Compromise, and in spite of it, before the Kansas Nebraska bill passed, and now it is asserted that there are not as many there as there were before the passage of the bill, notwithstanding that they had local laws sustaining and encouraging it enacted, as the Republicans say, by a "bogus" Legislature, imposed upon Kansas, by an invasion from Missouri. Why has not slavery obtained a foothold in Kansas under these circumstances? Simply because there was a majority of her people opposed to slavery, and every slave holder knew that if he took his slaves there, the moment that majority got possession of the ballot boxes, and a fair election was held, that moment slavery would be abolished and he would lose them. For that reason, such owners as took their slaves there brought them back to Missouri, fearing that if they remained they would be emancipated. Thus you see that under the principle of popular sovereignty, slavery has been kept out of Kansas, notwithstanding the fact that for the first three years they had a Legislature in that Territory favorable to it. I tell you, my friends, it is impossible under our institutions to force slavery on an unwilling people. If this principle of popular sovereignty asserted in the Nebraska bill be fairly carried out, by letting the people decide the question for themselves, by a fair vote, at a fair election, and with honest returns, slavery will never exist one day, or one hour, in any Territory against the unfriendly legislation of an unfriendly people. I care not how the Dred Scott decision may have settled the abstract question so far as the practical result is concerned; for, to use the language of an eminent southern Senator, on this very question—

"I do not care a fig which way the decision shall be, for it is of no particular consequence; slavery cannot exist a day, or an hour in any Territory or State, unless it has affirmative laws sustaining and supporting it, furnishing police regulations and remedies, and an omission to furnish them, would be as fatal as a constitutional prohibition. Without affirmative legislation in its favor, slavery could not exist any longer than a new born infant could survive under the heat of the sun, on a barren rock without protection. It would wilt and die for the want of support."

Hence, if the people of a Territory want slavery they will encourage it by passing affirmatory laws, and the necessary police regulations, patrol laws and

slave code; if they do not want it they will withhold that legislation, and by withholding it slavery is as dead as if it was prohibited by a Constitutional prohibition, (cheers,) especially if in addition their legislation is unfriendly, as it would be, if they were opposed to it. They could pass such local laws and police regulations as would drive slavery out in one day, or one hour, if they were opposed to it, and therefore, so far as the question of slavery in the Territories is concerned, so far as the principle of popular sovereignty is concerned, in its practical operation, it matters not how the Dred Scott case may be decided with reference to the Territories. My own opinion on that law point is well known. It is shown by my votes and speeches in Congress. But be it as it may, the question was an abstract question, inviting no practical results, and whether slavery shall exist or shall not exist in any State or Territory, will depend upon whether the people are for it or against it, and which ever way they shall decide it in any Territory or in any State, will be entirely satisfactory to me. (Cheers.)

But I must now bestow a few words upon Mr. Lincoln's main objection to the Dred Scott decision. He is not going to submit to it. Not that he is going to make war upon it with force of arms. But he is going to appeal and reverse it in some way; he cannot tell us how. I reckon not by a writ of error, because I do not know where he would prosecute that, except before an abolition society. ("That's it," and applause.) And when he appeals, he does not exactly tell us to whom he will appeal, except it be the Republican party, and I have yet to learn that the Republican party, under the Constitution, has judicial powers; but he is going to appeal from it and reverse it either by an act of Congress, or by turning out the judges, or in some other way. And why? Because he says that that decision deprives the negro of the benefits of that clause of the Constitution of the United States which entitles the citizens of each State to all the privileges and immunities of citizens of the several States. Well, it is very true that the decision does have that effect. By deciding that a negro is not a citizen, of course it denies to him the rights and privileges awarded to citizens of the United States. It is this that Mr. Lincoln will not submit to.—Why? For the palpable reason that he wishes to confer upon the negro all the rights, privileges, and immunities of citizens of the several States. I will not quarrel with Mr. Lincoln for his views on that subject. I have no doubt he is conscientious in them. I have not the slightest idea but that he conscientiously believes that a negro ought to enjoy and exercise all the rights and privileges given to white men, but I do not agree with him, and hence I can not concur with him. I believe that this government of ours was founded on the white basis. (Prolonged cheering.) I believe that it was established by white men. (Applause.) by men of European birth or descended of European races, for the benefit of white men and their posterity in all time to come. ("Hear," hear.") I do not believe that it was the design or intention of the signers of the declaration of Independence or the framers of the Constitution to include negroes, Indians or other inferior races with white men as citizens. (Cheers.) Our fathers had at that day seen the evil consequences of conferring civil and political rights upon the Indian and Negro in the Spanish and French colonies on the American continent and the adjacent islands. In Mexico, in Central America, in South America and in the West India islands, where the Indian, the Negro, and men of all colors and all races are put on an equality by law, the effect of political amalgamation can be seen. Ask any of those gallant young men in your own county, who went to Mexico to fight the battles of their country, in what friend Lincoln considers an unjust and unholy war, and hear what they will tell you in regard to the amalgamation of races in that country. Amalgamation there, first political, then social, has led to demoralization and degradation, until it has reduced that people below the point of capacity for self government. Our fathers knew what the effect of it would be, and from the time they planted foot on the American continent, not only those who landed at Jamestown, but at Plymouth Rock and all other points on the coast, they pursued the policy of confining civil and political rights to the white race, and excluding the negro in all cases.—Still Mr. Lincoln conscientiously believes that it is his duty to advocate negro citizenship. He wants to give the negro the privilege of citizenship.—He quotes Scripture again and says: "As your father in Heaven is perfect,

be ye also perfect," and he applies that Scriptural quotation to all classes, not that he expects us all to be as perfect as our master, but as nearly perfect as possible. In other words, he is willing to give the negro an equality under the law, in order that he may approach as near perfection or an equality with the white man as possible. To this same end he quotes the Declaration of Independence in these words: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men were created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;" and goes on to argue that the negro was included, or intended to be included in that declaration by the signers of the paper. He says that by the Declaration of Independence, therefore, all kinds of men, negroes included, were created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and further, that the right of the negro to be on an equality with the white man is a divine right conferred by the Almighty, and rendered inalienable according to the Declaration of Independence. Hence no human law or constitution can deprive the negro of that equality with the white man to which he is entitled by divine law. ("Higher law.") Yes, higher law. Now, I do not question Mr. Lincoln's sincerity on this point. He believes that the negro, by the Divine law, is created the equal of the white man, and that no human law can deprive him of that equality, thus secured; and he contends that the negro ought therefore to have all the rights and privileges of citizenship on an equality with the white man. In order to accomplish this the first thing that would have to be done in this State would be to blot out of our State Constitution that clause which prohibits negroes from coming into this State, and making it an African colony, and permit them to come and spread over these charming prairies until in midday they shall look black as night. When our friend Lincoln gets all his colored brethren around him here, he will then raise them to perfection as fast as possible, and place them on an equality with the white man, first removing all legal restrictions, because they are our equals by Divine law, and there should be no such restrictions. He wants them to vote. I am opposed to it. If they had a vote I reckon they would all vote for him in preference to me, entertaining the views I do. (Laughter.) But that matters not. The position he has taken on this question not only presents him as claiming for them the right to vote, but their right under the Divine law and the Declaration of Independence, to be elected to office, to become members of the Legislature, to go to Congress, to become Governors, or United States Senators, (laughter and cheers,) or Judges of the Supreme Court; and I suppose that when they control that Court they will probably reverse the Dred Scott Decision. (Laughter.) He is going to bring negroes here, and give them the right of citizenship, the right of voting, and the right of holding office and sitting on juries, and what else? Why, he would permit them to marry, would he not? And if he gives them that right, I suppose he will let them marry whom they please, provided they marry their equals. (Laughter.) If the Divine law declares that the white man is the equal of the negro woman—that they are on a perfect equality, I suppose he admits the right of the negro woman to marry the white man. (Renewed laughter.) In other words, his doctrine that the negro, by Divine law, is placed on a perfect equality with the white man, and that that equality is recognized by the Declaration of Independence, leads him necessarily to establish negro equality under the law; but whether even then they would be so in fact would depend upon the degree of virtue and intelligence they possessed, and certain other qualities that are matters of taste rather than of law. (Laughter.) I do not understand Mr. Lincoln as saying that he expects to make them our equals socially, or by intelligence, nor in fact as citizens, but that he wishes to make them our equals under the law, and then say to them, "as your master in Heaven is perfect be ye also perfect." Well, I confess to you my fellow citizens, that I am utterly opposed to that system of abolition philosophy ("So am I," and cheers.) I do not believe that the signers of the Declaration of Independence had any reference to negroes when they used the expression that all men were created equal, or that they had any reference to the Chinese or Coolies, the Indians, the Japanese, or any other inferior race. They were speaking of the white race, the European race on this continent, and their descendants, and emigrants who should

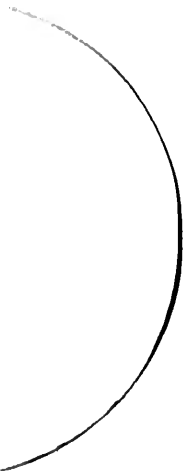
come here. They were speaking only of the white race, and never dreamed that their language would be construed to include the negro. (Cheers.) And now for the evidence of that fact. At the time the Declaration of Independence was put forth, declaring the equality of all men, every one of the thirteen colonies was a slaveholding colony, and every man who signed that Declaration represented a slaveholding constituency. Did they intend, when they put their signatures to that instrument, to declare that their own slaves were on an equality with them; that they were made their equals by divine law, and that any human law reducing them to an inferior position, was void, as being in violation of divine law? Was that the meaning of the signers of the Declaration of Independence? Did JEFFERSON and HENRY, and LEE—did any of the signers of that instrument, or all of them, on the day they signed it give their slaves freedom? History records that they did not. Did they go further, and put the negro on an equality with the white man throughout the country? They did not. And yet if they had understood that Declaration as including the negro, which Mr. Lincoln holds they did, they would have been bound, as conscientious men, to have restored the negro to that equality which he thinks the Almighty intended they should occupy with the white man. They did not do it. Slavery was abolished in only one State before the adoption of the Constitution in 1789, and then in others gradually, down to the time this abolition agitation began, and it has not been abolished in one since. The history of the country shows that neither the signers of the Declaration, or the framers of the Constitution ever supposed it possible that their language would be used in an attempt to make this nation a mixed nation of Indians, negroes, whites and mongrels. I repeat, that our whole history confirms the proposition that from the earliest settlement of the colonies down to the Declaration of Independence and the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, our fathers proceeded on the white basis, making the white people the governing race, but conceding to the Indian and negro, and all inferior races, all the rights and all the privileges they could enjoy consistent with the safety of the society in which they lived. ("That's right.") That is my opinion now. ("It is right.") I told you that humanity, philanthropy, justice and sound policy required that we should give the negro every right, every privilege, every immunity consistent with the safety and welfare of the State. The question then naturally arises what are those rights and privileges, and what is the nature and extent of them. My answer is that that is a question which each State and each Territory must decide for itself. We have decided that question. We have said that in this State the negro shall not be a slave, but that he shall enjoy no political rights—that negro equality shall not exist. I am content with that position. ("Right.") My friend Lincoln is not. He thinks that our policy and our laws on that subject are contrary to the Declaration of Independence. He thinks that the Almighty made the negro his equal and his brother. (Laughter and cheers.) For my part I do not consider the negro any kin to me, (great applause,) nor to any other white man; but I would still carry my humanity and my philanthropy to the extent of giving him every privilege and every immunity that he could enjoy, consistent with our own good. We in Illinois have the right to decide upon that question for ourselves, and we are bound to allow every other State to do the same. Maine allows the negro to vote on an equality with the white man. I do not quarrel with our friends in Maine for that. If they think it wise and proper in Maine to put the negro on an equality with the white man, and allow him to go to the polls and negative the vote of a white man, it is their business and not mine. On the other hand, New York permits a negro to vote provided he owns \$250 worth of property. New York thinks that a negro ought to be permitted to vote, provided he is rich, but not otherwise. They allow the aristocratic negro to vote there. (Laughter.) I never saw the wisdom, the propriety or the justice of that decision on the part of New York, and yet it never occurred to me that I had a right to find fault with that State. It is her business; she is a sovereign State, and has a right to do as she pleases, and if she will take care of her own negroes, making such regulations concerning them as suit her, and let us alone: I will mind my business, and not interfere with her. In Kentucky they will not give a negro any political or any civil rights. I shall not argue the question whether Kentucky in so doing has decided right

or wrong, wisely or unwisely. It is a question for Kentucky to decide for herself. I believe that the Kentuckians have consciences as well as ourselves; they have as keen a perception of their religious, moral and social duties as we have, and I am willing that they shall decide this slavery question for themselves, and be accountable to their God for their action. It is not for me to arraign them for what they do. I will not judge them lest I shall be judged. Let Kentucky mind her own business, and take care of her negroes, and we attend to our own affairs, and take care of our negroes, and we will be the best of friends; but if Kentucky attempts to interfere with us, or we with her, there will be strife, there will be discord, there will be relentless hatred, there will be everything but fraternal feeling and brotherly love. It is not necessary that you should enter Kentucky and interfere in that State, to use the language of Mr. Lincoln. It is just as offensive to interfere from this State, or send your missiles over there. I care not whether an enemy, if he is going to assault us, shall actually come into our State, or come along the line, and throw his bomb-shells over to explode in our midst. Suppose England should plant a battery on the Canadian side of the Niagara river, opposite Buffalo, and throw bomb-shells over, which would explode in Main street, in that city, and destroy the buildings, and that, when we protested, she would say, in the language of Mr. Lincoln, that she never dreamed of coming into the United States to interfere with us, and that she was just throwing her bombs over the line from her own side, which she had a right to do, would that explanation satisfy us? ("No;" "Strike him again.") So it is with Mr. Lincoln, He is not going into Kentucky, but he will plant his batteries on this side of the Ohio, where he is safe and secure for a retreat, and will throw his bomb shells—his abolition documents—over the river, and will carry on a political warfare, and get up strife between the North and the South until he elects a sectional President, reduces the South to the condition of dependent colonies, raises the negro to an equality, and forces the South to submit to the doctrine that a house divided against itself cannot stand—that the Union divided into half slave States and half free cannot endure—that they must all be slave or they must all be free, and that as we in the North are in the majority, we will not permit them to be all slave, and therefore they in the South must consent to the States all being free. (Laughter.) Now, fellow-citizens, I submit to you whether these doctrines are consistent with the peace and harmony of this Union. ("No, no.") I submit to you whether they are consistent with our duties as citizens of a common confederacy; whether they are consistent with the principles which ought to govern brethren of the same family? I recognize all the people of these States, North and South, East and West, old or new, Atlantic or Pacific, as our brethren, flesh of one flesh, and I will do no act unto them that I would not be willing they should do unto us. I would apply the same Christian rule to the States of this Union that we are taught to apply to individuals, "do unto others as you would have others do unto you," and this would secure peace. Why should this slavery agitation be kept up? Does it benefit the white man or the slave? Who does it benefit except the Republican politicians, who use it as their hobby to ride into office. (Cheers.) Why, I repeat, should it be continued? Why cannot we be content to administer this government as it was made—a confederacy of sovereign and independent States? Let us recognize the sovereignty and independence of each State, refrain from interfering with the domestic institutions and regulations of other States, permit the Territories and new States to decide their institutions for themselves, as we did when we were in their condition; blot out these lines of North and South, and resort back to these lines of State boundaries which the Constitution has marked out, and engraved upon the face of the country; have no other dividing lines but these, and we will be one united, harmonious people, with fraternal feelings, and no discord or dissension. (Cheers.)

These are my views and these are the principles to which I have devoted all my energies since 1850, when I acted side by side with the immortal Clay and the God-like Webster in that memorable struggle in which Whigs and Democrats united upon a common platform of patriotism and the Constitution, throwing aside partizan feelings in order to restore peace and harmony to a distracted country. And when I stood beside the death bed of Mr. Clay, and heard him

refer with feelings and emotions of the deepest solicitude to the welfare of the country, and saw that he looked upon the principle embodied in the great Compromise measures of 1850, the principle of the Nebraska bill, the doctrine of leaving each State and Territory free to decide its institutions for itself, as the only means by which the peace of the country could be preserved and the Union perpetuated,—I pledged him, on that death bed of his, that so long as I lived my energies should be devoted to the vindication of that principle, and of his fame as connected with it. (“Hear,” “hear,” and great enthusiasm.) I gave the same pledge to the great expounder of the Constitution, he who has been called the “God-like Webster.” I looked up to Clay and him as a son would to a father, and I call upon the people of Illinois, and the people of the whole Union to bear testimony that never since the sod has been laid upon the graves of these eminent statesmen have I failed on any occasion to vindicate the principle with which the last great, crowning acts of their lives were identified, or to vindicate their names whenever they have been assailed; and now my life and energy are devoted to this great work as the means of preserving this Union.—(Cheers.) This Union can only be preserved by maintaining the fraternal feeling between the North and the South, the East and the West. If that good feeling can be preserved, the Union will be as perpetual as the fame of its great founders. It can be maintained by preserving the Sovereignty of the States, the right of each State and each Territory to settle its domestic concerns for itself, and the duty of each to refrain from interfering with the other in any of its local or domestic institutions. Let that be done and the Union will be perpetual; let that be done, and this Republic, which began with thirteen States and which now numbers thirty-two; which when it began only extended from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, but now reaches to the Pacific, may yet expand North and South, until it covers the whole Continent, and becomes one vast ocean-bound confederacy. (Great cheering.) Then, my friends, the path of duty, of honor, of patriotism is plain. There are a few simple principles to be preserved. Bear in mind the dividing line between State rights and federal authority; let us maintain the great principles of popular sovereignty, of State rights, and of the Federal Union as the Constitution has made it, and this republic will endure forever.

I thank you kindly for the patience with which you have listened to me. I fear I have wearied you. (“No, no,” “Go on.”) I have a heavy day’s work before me to-morrow. I have several speeches to make. My friends, in whose hands I am, are taxing me beyond human endurance, but I shall take the helm and control them hereafter. I am profoundly grateful to the people of McLean for the reception they have given me, and the kindness with which they have listened to me. I remember that when I first came among you here, twenty-five years ago, that I was prosecuting attorney in this district, and that my earliest efforts were made here, when my deficiencies were too apparent, I am afraid, to be concealed from any one. I remember the courtesy and kindness with which I was uniformly treated by you all, and whenever I can recognize the face of one of your old citizens it is like meeting an old and cherished friend. I come among you with a heart filled with gratitude for past favors. I have been with you but little for the past few years on account of my official duties. I intend to visit you again before the campaign is over. I wish to speak to your whole people. I wish them to pass judgment upon the correctness of my course, and the soundness of the principles which I have proclaimed. If you do not approve my principles I cannot ask your support. If you believe that the election of Mr. Lincoln would contribute more to preserve the harmony of the country, to perpetuate the Union, and more to the prosperity and the honor and the glory of the State, then it is your duty to give him the preference. If, on the contrary, you believe that I have been faithful to my trust, and that by sustaining me you will give greater strength and efficiency to the principles which I have expounded, I shall then be grateful for your support. (“You have our support.” “We’ll stand by you,” &c., &c.) I renew my profound thanks for your attention.



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